

Pine Ridge Academy 12595 South Minuteman Drive Draper, Utah 84020

May 9, 2008





Utah State Office of Education 250 East 500 South P.O. Box 144200 Salt Lake City, Utah 84114-4200

THE REPORT OF THE VISITING TEAM REVIEWING

Pine Ridge Academy 12595 South Minuteman Drive Draper, UT 84020

May 9, 2008

UTAH STATE OFFICE OF EDUCATION

Patti Harrington, Ed.D. State Superintendent of Public Instruction

DIVISION OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AND SCHOOL SUCCESS

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FOREWORD

The major purpose of the accreditation process is to stimulate school growth and improvement so as to increase student achievement.

In these efforts, the school staff makes a comprehensive evaluation of the school's programs, operations, and results. The school determines how actual practices align to stated objectives and resulting outcomes. It is a three-phased evaluation: (1) self-evaluation, (2) on-site evaluation by an external team of educators, and (3) implementation using units of the evaluation to improve the school by effecting thoughtful change.

The evaluation, May 9, 2008, was conducted because of the school's desire to ensure quality education for all students in the school, and to increase student achievement.

The entire staff of Pine Ridge Academy is commended for the time and effort devoted to studying and evaluating the various facets of the total program and to preparing the materials used by the visiting team. The excellent leadership given by Lisa Wisham, Academic Director, is also commended.

The staff and administration are congratulated for their desire for excellence Pine Ridge Academy, and also for the professional attitude of all members of the group, which made it possible for them to see areas of weakness and strength and to suggest procedures for bringing about improvements.

While these recommendations may be used to solicit financial support to acquire some of the materials, equipment, and services needed to carry out a more effective program, it is even more important that the faculty and administration utilize them as they continue to evaluate and modify course offerings and administrative and classroom procedures to more dramatically increase student achievement at Pine Ridge Academy.

Patti Harrington, Ed.D. State Superintendent of Public Instruction

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7/25/2007

PINE RIDGE ACADEMY

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Ruth MooreVice President, Corporate Compliance, Aspen Education Group

PINE RIDGE ACADEMY

ADMINISTRATION AND STAFF

School Administration/Management Team

Trina Packard Executive Director Lisa Wisham Academic Director John Paul Parraga Clinical Director Tanya May Program Manager Richard Mickelsen, M.D Medical Director Quintana Pittman Residential Director Denice Dunker Admissions Director Brent Curtis Finance Director Stacey Astin Compliance & Operations Director Peggy Jacobsen Nursing Director				
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Support Staff (Cont.)

Carlos Connelly	Residential Supervisor
Mindy Hoke Exon	
Charlie Falatea	
Brian McDonald	

Faculty

Mike Christopherson Aaron Kammerman

Eric Peterson Mike Rogers Tini Mapu (Para-Educator)

MEMBERS OF THE VISITING TEAM

Ted P. Lovato, Consultant, Utah State Office of Education/Northwest Association of Accredited Schools, Chairperson

Genevieve Hunter, Education Director, LaEuropa Academy, Murray, Utah

Paul Keene, Principal, West Ridge Academy, West Jordan, Utah

Introduction

Purpose

Pine Ridge Academy is seeking continued accreditation by the Northwest Association of Accredited Schools (NAAS). NAAS is one of the premier American education accrediting agencies, accrediting over 1,800 public and private schools throughout the Northwest region of the United States and many other places in the world. The NAAS accreditation process establishes rigorous quality standards and validates the educational quality of schools through on-site reviews conducted by trained volunteer evaluators and consultants, as needed.

This document is the report of the evaluation team. The purpose of the on-site evaluation visit is to (1) validate the completion and accuracy of the school's self-study; (2) verify that the school meets the NAAS standards; (3) facilitate development and implementation of an effective school improvement plan; and (4) provide commendations and recommendations to enhance the school's quality.

Evaluation

A Visiting Team assembled by the Utah State Office of Education, which have had extensive expertise in accreditation, school improvement, international education and American education. The team members have graduate degrees in education and over 90 years of cumulative experience as educators and administrators.

The one-day evaluation was based on NAAS standards and quality indicators. Evaluation activities and methods used included review of the self-study materials, observations, and facilities. There were individual interviews of teachers, students and administrators. School records and documents were reviewed.

This report is prepared for the school to be used for its continuous improvement. Evaluation decisions were made by consensus, thus ratings and evaluative commendations and recommendations were developed by the team, and do not represent just one person's opinion.

An oral report highlighting the commendations and recommendations was presented to the administrator. This written report summarizes findings and offers commendations and recommendations. The school is encouraged to share the report with the school community, an advisory board, and appropriate authorities.

The report provides a specific judgment on whether each indicator of each standard is met. Whereas not all quality indicators under each standard must be fully met at the time of the review visit, the school must identify the needs and be working toward fully meeting each indicator.

This report includes ratings and findings, as well as commendations and recommendations. Ratings address the degree to which the school meets the standards and quality indicators. Findings are statements of fact that were observed or reported.

Commendations are areas that the team identified as strengths or that exceed expectations. It is important for the school to maintain those strong points because they contribute to overall quality. Recommendations refer to either the areas that need change or next steps for continuous improvement. Therefore, all schools receive recommendations. The number of recommendations in no way reflects the quality of the school.

PINE RIDGE ACADEMY

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Pine Ridge Academy is to assess each student's individual needs and provide them with a quality education, offering the tools to become a responsible citizen, effective communicator, and resourceful learner.

BELIEF STATEMENTS

- Each student learns in his/her own way.
- Each student's self-concept directly impacts learning.
- Each student must learn to effectively communicate and foster positive relationships in order to achieve success.
- To be a positive contributor to society, each student must learn and practice responsibility, integrity, and appreciation.
- Curriculum and instruction should include a variety of learning activities to accommodate differences in learning needs or preferences.
- Each student is a valued individual with unique physical, social, emotional and intellectual needs.

DESIRED RESULTS FOR STUDENT LEARNING (DRSLs)

- 1. Responsible Citizenship Students understand that their actions affect not only themselves, but also their family, community, nation, and world. They are committed to healthy practices that will benefit themselves and society. Students will be able to practice and obtain skills necessary for successfully entering the workplace.
- 2. <u>Effective Communication</u> Students understand that effective communication skills are important to their success in life, regardless of what career or vocation they pursue. Students demonstrate the ability to communicate effectively within the contexts of both the traditional learning environment and the emerging technologically-rich atmosphere. Students can find information from credible sources, organize, synthesize, and analyze the information, and express what they have learned in a clear and compelling way through speaking, writing, and publishing.
- 3. Personal Growth and Character Development Students will develop personal

qualities such as self-esteem, self-discipline, integrity, honesty, responsibility, sociability, and personal wellness for healthy living. Students will demonstrate self-awareness of their learning styles in order to actively engage in lifelong learning.

Date of Visit: May 9, 2008

VISITING TEAM REPORT

PINE RIDGE ACADEMY

CHAPTER 1: SCHOOL PROFILE

Pine Ridge Academy is located in the southern end of the Salt Lake Valley, in the fast-growing suburb of Draper. Pine Ridge Academy's location makes it possible for students to experience many indoor and outdoor activities that are enjoyable as well as educational. Youth Care of Utah, a Residential Treatment Center for adolescents ages 11-17, opened in 1989. Youth Care is licensed by the State of Utah Department of Human Resources and the Joint Commission on the Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO).

Pine Ridge Academy is the name of the school at Youth Care. Youth Care currently has four homes (Summit, Alpine, Horizon, and Pine Ridge), each of which houses between 14 and 17 students in a highly supervised co-ed (1:1 male to female ratio) environment. The students attend school at their respective homes from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Teachers travel from home to home. Students rarely mingle with residents of the other homes.

Pine Ridge Academy has a strong therapeutic program for students who have struggled with various issues such as depression, substance abuse, bi-polar disorder, and trauma. Students work in an intense therapeutic environment while also enrolling in the school program in an effort to maintain their individual academic schedule. It was obvious to the Visiting Team that a collaborative working relationship exists between the therapeutic staff and the education staff. It is apparent that there are more therapeutic than educational staff members.

a) What significant findings were revealed by the school's analysis of its profile?

The growth factor has been challenging for the staff of Pine Ridge Academy, which aims to maintain a small, "home-like" environment for students, in addition to the "one-room schoolhouse" in each house.

The demographic data shows a wide range of student academic needs. There is a need for a higher-level, more rigorous curriculum to meet the needs of those students desiring admittance to colleges or universities.

b) What modifications to the school profile should the school consider for the future?

The school staff is aware that there is a need for more valid and reliable data to gauge student academic growth, which would result in revising instructional strategies.

The high mobility rate of students is a challenge for the academic team at Pine Ridge Academy. There is a need to find methods for identifying the academic gains of individual students.

c) To what extent does the school's self-study accurately reflect the school's current strengths and limitations?

The self-study is in depth, but perhaps more valid and reliable data could be shown to demonstrate how students are growing academically. It was obvious to the Visiting Team that there are students requesting more rigor in their academic offerings to prepare them with post-secondary educational goals.

Suggested Areas for Further Inquiry:

- Seek reliable and valid data, including pre- and post-testing, on student academic achievement, or the lack thereof, to improve instructional strategies.
- Seek ways to add more rigor to the curriculum to meet the needs of deserving students.
- Seek ways how to produce valid and reliable data to measure the DRSLs; involvement of students and parents is strongly advised.

CHAPTER 2: NORTHWEST ASSOCIATION OF ACCREDITED SCHOOLS (NAAS) TEACHING AND LEARNING STANDARDS

The following represents the Visiting Team's renderings on the Core Standards for Accreditation and whether, in their collective judgment, each respective indicator is being substantially met.

1. MISSION, BELIEFS, AND DESIRED RESULTS FOR STUDENT LEARNING (DRSLs)

Guiding Principle: The school's mission statement describes the essence of what the school as a community of learners is seeking to achieve. The desired results for student learning are based on and drawn from the school's mission statement. These expectations are the fundamental goals by which the school continually assesses the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process. Every component of the school must focus on enabling all students to achieve the school's desired results for student learning.

1.1 The school's mission statement and desired results for student learning (DRSLs) are developed by the school and are approved and supported by the professional staff and any other school-wide governing organization.

1.2 The school's mission statement and beliefs represent the school's fundamental values and beliefs about student learning.

Substantially Met

1.3 The school defines school-wide academic, civic, and social learning expectations that are measurable, reflect the school's mission and beliefs, and are consistent with and reinforce the Utah's *Life Skills: A Guide to Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions for Success* and each Core Curriculum's intended learning outcomes.

Partially Met

1.4 For each academic expectation of the mission, the school has a targeted level of successful achievement identified in an indicator.

Partially Met

1.5 The school uses indicators to assess the school's progress in achieving school-wide civic, where applicable, and social expectations.

Partially Met

1.6 The school's mission statement, beliefs, and DRSLs guide the procedures, policies, and decisions of the school and are evident in the culture of the school.

Substantially Met

1.7 The school regularly reviews its mission statement, beliefs, and DRSLs using a variety of data to ensure that they reflect student needs, community expectations, the district/governing body mission, and state and national standards, as applicable.

Partially Met

Comments of the Visiting Team—Mission, Beliefs, and DRSLs Standard

- 1.3 The school has not yet made the DRSL measurable and no data has been taken.
- 1.4 The school has some measurement tools and indicators defined, but no targeted levels of successful achievement identified in an indicator.
- 1.5 The school has indicators, but no data has been collected.
- 1.7 Although the mission statement, beliefs, and DRSL have been reviewed by educational faculty and the management team, they have not been reviews by students, community, or parents. Focus groups and surveys might be helpful in the process.

2. CURRICULUM

Guiding Principle: The curriculum, including coursework, co-curricular activities, and other school-approved educational experiences, is the school's formal plan to fulfill its mission and desired results for student learning. The curriculum links the school's beliefs, desired results for student learning, and instructional practices. The strength of that link is dependent upon the

commitment and involvement of the professional staff to a comprehensive, ongoing review of the curriculum.

2.1 Each curriculum area identifies those school-wide academic expectations for which it is responsible.

Substantially Met

2.2 The curriculum is aligned with the school-wide academic expectations and ensures that all students have sufficient opportunity to achieve each of those expectations.

Partially Met

- 2.3 The written curriculum:
 - a. Prescribes content that aligns with the Utah State Core Curriculum.

Partially Met

b. Integrates relevant school-wide learning expectations reflecting the Utah *Life Skills: A Guide to Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions for Success.*

Partially Met

c. Identifies course-specific intended learning outcomes.

Partially Met

d. Suggests instructional strategies.

Partially Met

e. Suggests assessment techniques including the use of school-wide expectations for student learning.

Partially Met

2.4 The curriculum engages all students in inquiry, problem-solving, and higher-order thinking, as well as providing opportunities for the authentic application of knowledge and skills.

Partially Met

2.5 The curriculum is appropriately integrated and emphasizes depth of understanding over breadth of coverage.

Substantially Met

2.6 The school provides opportunities for all students to extend learning beyond the normal course offerings and the school campus.

Partially Met

2.7 There is effective curricular coordination and articulation between and among all academic areas within the school and the student's home school/district.

Substantially Met

2.8 A record that documents the results of all students' performance is maintained.

Substantially Met

2.9 The school has a written policy statement concerning the selection of educational materials. Substantially Met

2.10 The instructional materials are selected to support the specific objectives of the individual courses, as well as the school's overall mission and goals.

Substantially Met

- 2.11 The materials provided to the students are adequate to meet the course objectives. Substantially Met
- 2.12 The reading level of the materials is appropriate to the reading-level competence of the students.

Substantially Met

2.13 The materials are up-to-date.

Substantially Met

2.14 Adequate provisions are made for the prompt delivery and return of instructional materials, lessons, and examinations to and from the students.

Substantially Met

2.15 Lessons and examinations are graded promptly and the results communicated to the students and their parents/guardians.

Substantially Met

- 2.16 Student (parent/guardian) inquiries are answered promptly and satisfactorily. Substantially Met
- 2.17 The procedures for granting credit and/or for determining progress toward graduation are consistent with the school's stated purposes.

Substantially Met

2.18 The procedures for granting credit are in writing and are available to enrolled students.

Substantially Met

2.19 Instructional materials, technology, equipment, supplies, facilities, and staffing levels, and the resources of the library/media center are sufficient to allow for the effective implementation of the curriculum.

Substantially Met

2.20 The professional staff is actively involved in the ongoing development, evaluation, and revision of the curriculum based on assessments of student performance in achieving the school's academic expectations and course-specific learning goals.

Substantially Met

2.21 The school commits sufficient time, financial resources, and personnel to the development, evaluation, and revision of curriculum.

2.22 Professional development activities support the development and implementation of the curriculum.

Substantially Met

2.23 The program of studies meets the requirements of the state, ministry, or parent organization, as applicable.

Substantially Met

2.24 The curriculum is adapted to meet the individual student learning needs.

Partially Met

2.25 The students are aware of the curriculum being taught and are appropriately involved.

Substantially Met

<u>Utah-Specific Indicators—Curriculum Standard</u>

2.26 The curriculum meets the Utah graduation and credit requirements, and all courses align to, meet, or exceed Utah State Core Curricula in accordance with Board Rule R277-705.

Substantially Met

- 2.27 Rules and policy that require parent or guardian notification are followed. Substantially Met
- 2.28 The curriculum includes patriotic education as outlined in Board Rule R277-475-3.* Not Applicable

Comments of the Visiting Team—Curriculum Standards

- 2.2 The curriculum maps are partially done and do not include honors or other enrichment areas. Also, BYU independent study classes are used, but no teacher is credentialed to supervise and proctor those classes.
- 2.3 The curriculum maps are incomplete and do not include all subjects being taught.
- 2.4 No honors, AP, or enrichment classes are offered
- 2.6 Students have limited access to high-level classes; there seems to be a strong interest in a college-prep curriculum among students interviewed.
- 2.19 Some teachers lack proper credentials. The library should be expanded to include more nonfiction selections, and every effort needs to be made to employ the services of a

^{*}Does not necessarily apply to non-public schools.

licensed librarian/media specialist, who could be a part-time or consultant educator.

2.24 No honors, AP, or enrichment classes are offered.

3. INSTRUCTION

Guiding Principle: The quality of instruction in a school is the single most important factor affecting the quality of student learning, achievement of desired results for student learning, the delivery of the curriculum, and the assessment of student progress. Instructional practices must be grounded in the school's mission, beliefs, and desired results for student learning, supported by research in best practices, and refined and improved based on identified student needs. Teachers are expected to be reflective about their instructional strategies and to collaborate with their colleagues about instruction and student learning.

3.1 Instructional strategies and practices are consistent with the school's stated mission, beliefs and DRSLs.

Substantially Met

- 3.2 Teachers use a variety of instructional strategies to:
 - a. Personalize instruction by providing concrete examples.

Substantially Met

- b. Make connections across disciplines by linking examples to other subjects. Partially Met
- c. Engage students as learners by using a variety of strategies.

Substantially Met

d. Engage students as self-directed learners by providing opportunities for problem solving.

Substantially Met

e. Involve students in higher-order thinking.

Partially Met

f. Provide opportunities for students to apply knowledge or skills.

Partially Met

- g. Promote student self-assessment and self-reflection of what has been taught. Partially Met
- Recognize diversity, multiculturalism, individual differences, and other prevalent unique characteristics of the student population.
 Substantially Met
- 3.3 Teachers use feedback from a variety of sources—including other teachers, students, supervisors, and parents—as a means of improving instruction.

Partially Met

3.4 Teachers are proficient in their content area, knowledgeable about current research on effective instructional approaches, and reflective about their own practices.

Partially Met

3.5 Analysis of instructional strategies is a significant part of the professional culture of the school.

Partially Met

3.6 Technology is integrated into and supportive of teaching and learning.

Substantially Met

3.7 Library information services are available to students and faculty and utilized to improve teaching and learning.

Partially Met

3.8 The school's professional development program is guided by identified instructional needs and provides opportunities for teachers to develop and improve their instructional strategies.

Substantially Met

3.9 Teacher supervision and evaluation processes are used to improve instruction in order to meet the needs of all students.

Partially Met

Utah-Specific Indicators—Instruction Standard

3.10 Instructional time is allocated and protected to support student learning.

Partially Met

3.11 The teaching and learning program focuses on and utilizes educationally accepted best practices.

Partially Met

Comments of the Visiting Team—Instruction Standard

- 3.2 There is a need for more direct instruction to meet the needs of students. Students' abilities pose a wide range of challenges to the instructors, from those seeking more rigor to those who are in the special needs categories.
- 3.4 The Visiting Team discovered teachers teaching out of their content areas, and school leaders are fully aware this challenge is a high priority. Teachers at PRA, as much as possible, are personalizing coursework to meet the diverse student population in a small setting. A need for more direct instructional practices was evident.
- 3.5 Teachers need to involve students in more group discussions to improve the learning process.
- 3.6 Technology is used in all aspects of the learning process wherever applicable.
- 3.7 PRA needs to find and contract with a media science specialist. Although the school does

have a small number of books, it needs more that are age-appropriate for their students.

- 3.8 PRA does a fine job with professional development efforts, especially in instructing the staff how to effectively work with the school's at-risk clients.
- 3.9 Teachers meet daily to assess the learning processes that work with a wide variety of students and make changes as needed to meet their needs. This is commendable.
- 3.10 Therapeutic needs of students may result in educational interruption.
- 3.11 The teaching and learning program could focus more on educationally accepted best practices.

4. ASSESSMENT

Guiding Principle: Assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning process. Its purpose is to inform students regarding their learning progress and teachers regarding ways to adjust the curriculum and instruction to respond effectively to the learning needs of students. Further, it communicates to parents the progress of students in achieving the school's expectations for student learning, as well as course-specific learning goals. Assessment results must be continually analyzed to improve curriculum and instruction.

4.1 The school has a process to assess both school-wide and individual student progress in achieving the academic expectations of the mission.

Substantially Met

4.2 The school's professional staff uses data (climate survey, empirical, etc.) to assess the school's success in achieving its civic and social expectations.

Partially Met

4.3 Teachers clarify for students the relevant school-wide academic expectations and course-specific learning goals that will be assessed.

Substantially Met

4.4 Teachers base classroom assessment of student learning on school-wide and coursespecific indicators for intended learning outcomes.

Substantially Met

4.5 Teachers use varied assessment strategies to determine student knowledge, skills, and competencies and to assess student growth over time.

Substantially Met

4.6 Teachers meet collaboratively to discuss and share student work and the results of student assessments for the purposes of revising the curriculum and improving instructional strategies.

4.7 The school's professional development program provides opportunities for teachers to collaborate in developing a broad range of assessment strategies.

Substantially Met

4.8 The school's professional staff communicates individual student progress in achieving school-wide academic expectations to students and their families.

Partially Met

4.9 Results and analysis of academic assessment are used to drive curriculum and instruction.

Partially Met

4.10 A record that documents the results of all student performance is maintained. <u>Substantially Met</u>

Utah Specific Indicators—Assessment Standard

4.11 Teachers receive and use the results of standardized assessments in a timely manner to facilitate and improve instruction. (For public school this would include the CRT, Iowa Test and UBSCT results.)*

Partially Met

4.12 Proficiency criteria are explicitly described in course descriptions as per Board Rule R277-700-3.

Substantially Met

4.13 The school assesses English acquisition using annual measurable achievement objectives.*

Not Applicable

* Do not necessarily apply to non-public schools.

Comments of the Visiting Team—Assessment Standard:

- 4.2 There is a lack of valid and reliable data to assess school success in achieving its civic and social expectations.
- 4.8 More information was needed for the Visiting Team to determine whether the communication of individual students' academic progress to their families is evident.
- 4.9 There is evidence that results from the Woodcock-Johnson III Test of Academic Achievement are used for math placement, but more information is lacking for the placement of those students who are seeking more rigor in the curriculum.
- 4.11 A broader range of educational standardized assessments are lacking, but it was evident to the Visiting Team that there exists an extensive battery of assessments for psychological purposes.

CHAPTER 3: NAAS SCHOOL SUPPORT STANDARDS

5. LEADERSHIP AND ORGANIZATION

Guiding Principle: The way that a school organizes learning for students, fosters leadership, and engages its members has a profound effect on teaching and learning. The professional culture of the school must be characterized by thoughtful, reflective, and constructive discourse about decision making and practices that supports student learning and well-being.

5.1 The academic administrator has sufficient autonomy and decision-making authority to lead the school in achieving the mission, beliefs, and DRSLs.

Substantially Met

5.2 The academic administrator provides leadership in the school community by creating and maintaining a shared vision, direction, and focus for student learning.

Substantially Met

5.3 The student-to-academic administrator ratio does not exceed 450 students to each qualified administrator or a prorated fraction thereof.

Substantially Met

5.4 Staff members, as well as administrators other than the academic administrator; provide leadership essential to the improvement of the school.

Substantially Met

5.5 Excessive staff turnover does not affect school effectiveness. The school evaluates staff turnover and addresses any concerns about staff retention.

Partially Met

5.6 The organization of the school and its educational programs promotes the achievement of the school's mission, beliefs, and DRSLs.

Substantially Met

5.7 Student grouping patterns reflect the ethnic diversity of the student body, foster heterogeneity, reflect current research and best practices, and support the achievement of the school's mission, beliefs, and DRSLs.

Substantially Met

5.8 The schedule is driven by the school's mission, beliefs, and DRSLs, and supports the effective implementation of the curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

Substantially Met

5.9 Meaningful roles in the decision-making process are accorded to students, parents, and all members of the school staff to promote an atmosphere of participation, responsibility, and ownership.

Partially Met

5.10 There is a formal system through which each student has an adult staff member who knows the student well and assists the student in achieving the school-wide expectations for student learning.

Substantially Met

5.11 The professional staff members collaborate within and across departments or grade levels in support of learning for all students.

Substantially Met

5.12 All school staff members are involved in promoting the well-being and learning of students.

Substantially Met

5.13 Student success is regularly acknowledged, celebrated, and displayed.

Substantially Met

Partially Met

Not Presently Met

5.14 The climate of the school is safe, positive, respectful, and supportive, resulting in a sense of pride and ownership.

Substantially Met

5.15 The school has a written code of student conduct.

Substantially Met

- 5.16 Teacher supervision and evaluation processes are used to improve instruction. Substantially Met
- 5.17 The academic administrator is significantly involved in the selection, assignment, and retention of instructional personnel.

Substantially Met

5.18 The school employs an adequate staff, both professional and non-certified, to support student enrollment and to realize its stated purposes.

Substantially Met

Partially Met

Not Presently Met

5.19 The school meets all applicable state requirements and regulations for licenser, organization, academic administrators, and control, unless state authorities have granted official exemption.

Not Presently Met

<u>Utah-Specific Indicators—Leadership and Organization Standard</u>

5.20 The school has a written policy prohibiting discrimination, and regular training is provided to ensure compliance in accordance with Board Rule R277-112-3-C. Substantially Met

5.21 The school has a written policy explaining the process and standards for acceptance and reciprocity of credits earned by students in accordance with Board Rule R277-705-3.

Substantially Met

5.22 Teachers have reviewed and are familiar with the *Life Skills: A Guide to Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions for Success* document and implemented them into the curricula they are teaching.

Substantially Met

Comments of the Visiting Team—Leadership and Organization Standard

- 5.5 The administration does not believe that the turnover during the past three years has been so excessive as to negatively affect student learning. In that period of time, there were 209 new hires compared to 179 terminations, which the Visiting Team found to be excessive.
- 5.9 Even though the students, parents, teachers, and staff collaborate on many student issues through an inclusive decision-making process, the Visiting Team found a lack of student/parent input into the formation of the school's DRSLs.
- 5.19 The Visiting Team found that some core subjects were being taught by underqualified instructors.

6. SCHOOL SERVICES

Guiding Principle: Student learning and well-being are dependent upon adequate and appropriate support programs and services. The school is responsible for providing an effective range of integrated resources to enhance and improve student learning and well-being and to support the school's mission and expectations.

Student Support Services

6.1 The school's student support services are consistent with the school's mission, beliefs, and DRSLs.

Substantially Met

- 6.2 The school allocates resources, programs, and services so that all students have a reasonable opportunity to achieve the school's expectations for student learning.

 Substantially Met
- 6.3 Student support personnel enhance student learning by interacting and working cooperatively with professional and other staff members, and by utilizing community resources to address the academic, social, emotional, and physical needs of students.

6.4 All student support services are regularly evaluated and revised as needed to support improved student learning.

Partially Met

6.5 All professional personnel are in compliance with the Utah Educator Licensing requirements and are appropriately endorsed for all assignments in accordance with Board Rule R277-501.

Partially Met

- 6.6 The total number of students instructed by any one teacher does not exceed 160. Substantially Met
- 6.7 There is a system for effective and ongoing communication with students, parents/guardians, and school personnel, designed to keep them informed about the types of available student support services and identified student needs.

 Substantially Met
- 6.8 Student records, including health and immunization records, are maintained in a confidential and secure manner consistent with federal (FERPA) law.

 Substantially Met
- 6.9 All teachers are given appropriate orientation training. Substantially Met
- 6.10 Teachers are carefully supervised by the academic administrative staff.

 Substantially Met
- 6.11 The non-professional clerical and paraprofessional staff members are carefully selected and have appropriate training and background for their positions.

 Substantially Met
- 6.12 Policies for the selection and assignment of personnel are non-discriminatory in reference to race, ethnic origin, and sex.

Substantially Met

Utah Specific Indicators—Student Support Services

6.13 All school employees have been instructed regarding their responsibilities and follow required procedures in cases of suspected child neglect and physical or sexual abuse in accordance with Board Rule R277-401-3.

Substantially Met

6.14 The school communicates to parents/guardians all assessment practices used by teachers in the preferred language of the parents and facilitates direct involvement in their children's education (i.e., English as a second language programs, English literacy programs, homework programs and home assessment tools).

Guidance Services

- 6.15 The school provides a full range of comprehensive guidance services, including:
 - a. Individual and group meetings with guidance personnel.

Partially Met

b. Personal, career, and college counseling.

Partially Met

c. Student course selection assistance.

Partially Met

d. Appropriate support in the delivery of special education services for students, as applicable.

Partially Met

6.16 The ratio of students to those who provide guidance and counseling services does not exceed 400 students to those respective individuals.

Substantially Met

6.17 The guidance service facilities are large enough to house program personnel, equipment, and material. (Counseling spaces should be easily accessible to all students, equipped with offices for each professional school counselor, installed telephones, computer connections, etc.)

Partially Met

<u>Utah-Specific Indicators—Guidance Services</u>

6.18 The Comprehensive Guidance Program (Board Rule R277-462) reflects the school's mission, beliefs and DRSLs.*

Not Applicable

6.19 School counselors can provide evidence that the Comprehensive Guidance Program is contributing to student achievement.*

Not Applicable

* Do not necessarily apply to non-public schools.

Health Services

6.21 The school has a current health service plan providing resources to meet the needs of all the students.

Substantially Met

6.22 The school has a crisis response plan that is tested and updated annually as outlined in Board Rule R277-400.

Library Information Services

- 6.23 The library media program is directed by a certified library media specialist.
 - a. Library staff in schools of **fewer than 250 students** need not be certified, but are under the direction of a qualified library media specialist.
 - b. Schools with an **enrollment between 250 and 500 students** have a full-time qualified library media specialist.
 - c. Schools with more than **500 students** have a full-time library media specialist and have additional library media personnel.
 - d. Personnel are under the direction of a qualified library media specialist. Not Presently Met
- 6.24 Students, faculty, and support staff have regular and frequent access to library/information services, facilities, and programs as an integral part of their educational experience before, during, and after the school day.

Substantially Met

6.25 The library/information services program fosters independent inquiry by enabling students and faculty to use various school and community information resources and technologies.

Partially Met

6.26 The school has a written policy concerning the selection and removal of information resources and the use of technologies and the Internet.

Partially Met

Utah-Specific Indicator—Library Information Services

6.27 The library collection and information resources are relevant, up-to-date and of sufficient size (10 volumes per student) to meet the program of curricular and literacy needs of the students and faculty.

Partially Met

Special Education Services

6.28 The school provides special education services related to the identification, monitoring, and referral of students in accordance with local, state, and federal laws, as applicable. Substantially Met

Family and Community Services

6.29 The school engages parents and families as partners in each student's education as appropriate to the school's program.

Partially Met

6.30 The school fosters productive business/community/higher education partnerships that support student learning appropriate to the school's program.

<u>Substantially Met</u>

Comments of the Visiting Team—Student Support Services Standard

- 6.4 Student services such as counseling for college and other post-graduate goals need to be improved upon to allow students to explore all avenues for their future.
- 6.5 Teachers are not licensed in all the areas that they teach. Most teachers are certified in special education, but some are not endorsed in their specific areas of instruction. The art teacher has a degree in psychology, but no art background whatsoever.
- 6.15 Pine Ridge Academy needs to find a way to meet with the students whose educational progress is leading to college and map out a plan for their future. Students receive excellent therapeutic counseling, but there is a lack of comprehensive educational counseling.
- 6.17 See 6.15.
- 6.24 The Pine Ridge Academy team needs to contract with a media/librarian (who need not be full-time) in order to provide valuable information regarding the literacy needs of Pine Ridge Academy's unique population.
- 6.25 Library information systems are useful and available to students' use in conjunction to their coursework, but there is a need for improvement that could be facilitated by a professional librarian.
- 6.29 Pine Ridge Academy meets with parent, students, and therapists every six weeks. This is commendable and should be continued, but there is a need to continue to update parents, using reliable and viable data, regarding academic programs.

7. FACILITIES AND FINANCES

Guiding Principle: The school plant (consisting of site, buildings, equipment, and services) is an important factor in the functioning of the educational program. The school plant serves as a vehicle for the implementation of the school mission. The school plant should provide for a variety of instructional activities and programs and for the health and safety of **ALL** persons. The school plant should incorporate aesthetic features that contribute to a positive educational atmosphere while providing for needed flexibility. In addition to an appropriate facility, sufficient fiscal resources must be

available, accounted for, and effectively used in order for any school to accomplish its mission and expectations for student learning.

7.1 The school site and plant support and enhance all aspects of the educational program and the support services for student learning.

Substantially Met

7.2 The physical plant and facilities meet all applicable federal and state laws, and are in compliance with local fire, health, and safety regulations.

Substantially Met

7.3 Equipment is adequate, properly maintained, catalogued, and replaced when appropriate.

Substantially Met

7.4 A planned and adequately funded program of building and site management ensures the appropriate maintenance, repair, and cleanliness of the school plant.

Substantially Met

7.5 There is ongoing planning to address future programs, enrollment changes, staffing, facility, and technology needs, as well as capital improvements.

Substantially Met

7.6 Faculty and building administrators have active involvement in the budgetary process, including its development and implementation, where applicable.

Substantially Met

7.7 The school has sustainable financial resources to provide services to students, meet the stated purposes of the school, and provide the educational program to the students.

Substantially Met

7.8 Proper budgetary procedures and generally accepted accounting principles are followed for all school funds.

Substantially Met

7.9 The school's accounts are independently audited annually.

Substantially Met

7.10 The total cost for a course of instruction, including all textbooks, materials, and instructional services, is made known to parents at the time of their application and/or registration, where applicable.

Substantially Met

7.11 Terms of tuition and/or fees payment are clearly defined in the application, where applicable.

- 7.12 Any advertising and promotional literature is completely truthful and ethical. Substantially Met
- 7.13 Any advertising and promotional literature clearly states the purpose of the school's program of instruction.

Substantially Met

7.14 None of the school's advertising and promotional literature is offensive or negative toward other schools or educational agencies.

Substantially Met

- 7.15 Tuition collection procedures shall be in keeping with sound and ethical business practices and protect the financial interest of the school, where applicable.

 Substantially Met
- 7.16 The administration has the authority to administer its discretionary budget, where applicable.

Substantially Met

Comments of the Visiting Team—Facilities and Finances Standard

- 7.1-7.7 Pine Ridge Academy has exceptional facilities; they are clean and well kept. The school has plans in place for the maintenance and renovation when needed.
- 7.12-7.14 Pine Ridge Academy literature is very forthright, and gives both parents and students a true understanding of the school and program.
- 7.15-7.16 Pine Ridge Academy has funds set aside for the running the school; the school has sound practices for accounting and authority to use funds needed to run the school.

CHAPTER 4: NAAS SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT STANDARD

8. CULTURE OF CONTINUAL IMPROVEMENT

Guiding Principle: A quality school develops and maintains an externally validated process and plan for school improvement. Goals resulting from the evaluation process should include targeted levels of achievement and be measurable.

8.1 The school has developed and implemented a comprehensive school improvement plan using *Collaborating for Student Achievement*, the Utah accreditation school improvement process, that is reviewed and revised on an ongoing basis.

Substantially Met

8.2 Results of school improvement are identified, documented, used, and communicated to all stakeholders.

Partially Met

8.3 The school improvement effort is externally validated on a periodic basis by an onsite accreditation visiting team.

Substantially Met

8.4 The school improvement plan is consistent with external accountability requirements such as those of the state in which the school is located. These could also be ministry or federal accountability requirements.

Partially Met

- 8.5 The school improvement process provides an orderly process for:
 - a. Selecting the most appropriate areas upon which to focus improvement efforts. Partially Met
 - b. Developing strategies that are designed to improve student performance.

 Partially Met
 - c. Implementing those strategies.

Partially Met

d. Monitoring the process.

Partially Met

e. Evaluating the process to ensure that success has been attained.

Partially Met

8.6 The school improvement process is the result of a school self-evaluation that addresses the major recommendations for improvement as identified in the self-study.

Partially Met

8.7 Goal statements for the school improvement process are properly aligned with the implementation plan and clearly identify measures of success.

Partially Met

8.8 A reasonable, specific timeline for the implementation of each area within the school improvement process is identified.

Substantially Met

8.9 The school improvement process involves a site-based council or advisory committee.

Utah-Specific Indicator—Culture of Continuous Improvement Standard

8.10 The school incorporates the recommendations from the external evaluation (Report of the Visiting Team) into the school improvement plan.

<u>Substantially Met</u>

Comments of the Visiting Team—Continuous Improvement Standard

- 8.2 More effort is needed to include parents and students in the formation of DRSLs of the school.
- 8.4 All teachers instructing in the Core Curriculum must be endorsed and licensed, and all content areas must be instructed by a teacher licensed in that area.
- 8.5a.-e. There is a need to offer more rigor to the curriculum for those students who are requesting it. There are some students who feel too isolated with their respective courses of study and require a greater effort in direct instruction methods. Meeting the needs of a short-term student population is a challenge, but there is a need to have formal measures in place to assess student achievement across curricular areas.
- 8.6 Refer to 8.5a 8.5e above.
- 8.7 The school has some measurement tools and indicators defined, but no targeted levels of successful achievement identified in an indicator.

CHAPTER 5: MAJOR COMMENDATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE VISITING TEAM

As result of the onsite visit, the Visiting Team determined that there were commendations regarding the school and program, and as well some recommendations for the school staff and administration to consider during the next years of accreditation. These follow and represent both general impressions and some that are specifically related to the Core Standards for Accreditation. The school should make every effort to review each commendation and recommendation and put into place plans for celebration and/or prioritization for school improvement. The school is expected, as part of its annual report to account for its progress toward achieving those recommendations as prioritized in the school's improvement plan.

Commendations:

• The Visiting Team commends Pine Ridge Academy for the competent, caring, and dedicated staff that works diligently and collaboratively to see that these

acutely at-risk youth succeed in their many educational and therapeutic endeavors at Pine Ridge Academy.

- The Visiting Team commends Pine Ridge Academy for the quality, clean, homelike, and nurturing facilities that support the one-room school model, which enhances the educational experience and supports the students in a safe and comfortable environment.
- The Visiting Team commends Pine Ridge Academy for its efforts to involve all students in educational endeavors and personal growth. The Visiting Team observed that, with some students at Pine Ridge Academy, this is a major challenge.
- The Visiting Team commends the Pine Ridge Academy accreditation leadership team and the school staff for the self-study, which was in-depth and well organized, and presented an accurate overview of the Pine Ridge Academy educational program. The Visiting Team was appreciative of the efforts expended by the staff in preparation for the on-site evaluation.
- The Visiting Team commends the teachers' support and understanding of the school's mission, beliefs, and DRSLs.
- The Visiting Team commends Pine Ridge Academy for providing professional development and collaborative opportunities to teachers, thus improving their skills in working with at-risk students.
- The Visiting Team commends Pine Ridge Academy for the academic calendar, which provides a six-quarter system for educating the highly mobile and educationally at-risk student population.
- The Visiting Team commends Youth Care/Pine Ridge Academy for a strong family therapy component that supports the individual goals and academic growth of students.

Recommendations:

- The Visiting Team recommends that all teachers be endorsed and licensed, and that all content areas be instructed by specific-content-area, highly qualified teachers. In addition, Pine Ridge Academy leaders must expend resources to obtain the services of a licensed librarian/media specialist.
- The Visiting Team recommends that the Pine Ridge Academy team, including students, develop a process for evaluating the school's DRSLs and their overall effectiveness in the classroom. Pine Ridge Academy must find a mechanism for the collection of this data and its use in evaluation of continuous growth.

- The Visiting Team recommends that Pine Ridge Academy investigate an effective program for pre- and post-assessment to measure student academic growth and adjust instructional strategies as needed.
- The Visiting Team recommends that the Pine Ridge Academy educational team develop a more rigorous and challenging curriculum for those students who qualify for a college-prep track; this should include foreign languages, honor classes, higher-level mathematics, etc. In addition, offer post-secondary guidance counseling services, which could include college advisement, ACT/SAT test preparation strategies, and career/college resource materials, which are readily accessible at little or no cost.
- The Visiting Team recommends that the staff use valid and reliable data to assess school success in achieving its civic and social expectations.
- The Visiting Team recommends that Pine Ridge Academy investigate group direct instructional practices to avoid student isolation through excessive individualization.